

12-08-22 NYCOALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT; Paul Wolf, Lawrence Vito, Janet Vito, Mary Lou Cebula, Axel Ebermann, Maria Tisby, Carol, Michelle Allen, Robert Godlewski, Tina Carney, Cory Morris, Jane Curtis, Caitlin Curtin, Alberta Roman(recorderer).

Meeting called to Order; 6:34 pm by Paul Wolf President with recording going.

MEETING MINUTES from 11/10/22; Minutes are on pages 3-5 in Agenda. Motion to accept made by Janet Vito and seconded by Mary Lou Cebula. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT; Report by Janet Vito, 81 members and \$4,406.05 balance as of end of November. Motion to accept made by Alberta Roman and Seconded by Maria Tisby. Motion carried. Annual dues are up on March-\$20.

BOARD ELECTIONS; Our 12 Board positions are for 2 year staggered terms. Six seats are up in January 2023. The following Board Member terms expire in January 2023: Paul Wolf, Steve Lyle, Suzanne Kelly, Alberta Roman, Mary Lou Cebula and Joe Kissel. All Board Members except Joe Kissel have expressed an interest in continuing to serve.

If you are interested in being on the Board, please send an email to paulwolf2@gmail.com expressing your interest with information about your background. The executive Committee of the Board will consider the applicants and make a recommendation to the Board at the January 2023 meeting. The Coalition Board makes the decision on filling Board seats.

At the January 2023 meeting the Board will also address the appointment of the following officer positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Our current officers are:

President – Paul Wolf

Vice President – Joe Kissel

Treasurer – Janet Vito

Secretary – Alberta Roman

All of the current officers have expressed interest in continuing to serve except for Joe Kissel. If you are interested in serving as an officer please send an email expressing your interest with a copy of your resume to paulwolf2@gmail.com.

BUDGET LETTER TO GOV. HOCHUL; Often Gov. will put legislative items in Budget. This letter proposes several ways the Governor can show commitment to

transparency. No response gotten yet. In a week, will do press release so they have time to be prepared. Why cannot we do grants for open government?

UB CIVIL RIGHTS AND TRANSPARENCY CLINIC LETTER TO COMMITTEE ON OPEN GOV. Shown on 11-12 pages in agenda. New Clinic Director reached out for possibility of joint project, like requiring State Agencies to do annual report of items such as FOIL requests, response time, number denied.

2023 CALENDAR; This is a draft and will be voted in Jan. 2023. Many anniversary days are opportunities to highlight agenda items.

ATTORNEY GENERAL MEDIATION; We sent a letter to Attorney General suggesting NY State do as other states who assist citizens in mediating complaints. We got a response and met with staffers without much real good result. The suggestion was to put together legislation in this area. Mike Franklin brought attention to the real-estate tax assessment hearing process and the possibility of a similar approach to address open government complaints. Michelle Allen put forth the idea that we are being very specific and should be heard.

OPEN MEETING LAW COMMITTEE; Paul Wolf gathering information on Report regarding private caucus meetings held by governmental bodies. There was a poor response to first and second emails sent.

Coalition recently released a report regarding the poor compliance in towns posting meeting documents online as required by the Open Meetings Law. For 10 years now public bodies have been required to post meeting documents online and our report shows 72% of towns reviewed are not in compliance with the law. Legislator Amy Paulin who wrote the law 10 years ago is interested in revisiting this matter. Perhaps some training is in order. Also reported is request that the Board send a letter to the NYC Borough Presidents regarding the use of private emails by community board members. A motion made to send such letter to 5 Borough Presidents made by Maria Tisby and seconded by Michelle Allen. This motion was carried.

FREEDOM of INFORMATION LAW COMMITTEE; Minutes of last meeting included in agenda packet pg 16-18. Maria Tisby Chair reported request that the Board form a litigation fund sub-committee. Instead of forming another committee the consensus was to address this issue thru the Public Relations group. Possible

“crowd funding” or partnering for service in kind, etc. NYCOG is a 501c3 organization and donations are tax deductible.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/EDUCATION Group; Minutes included in agenda packet pg19-20. Report made by Chair Michelle Allen to check out our List Serv (Google Group) made to control emails. Also discussed were “naughty and nice list” to recognize good and bad open government actions in a playful way. Speakers discussed for annual meeting in May. Also discussed was the vacancy and ineffective functioning of the NYState Committee on Open Government.

NEW BUSINESS; None mentioned.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Maria Tisby and seconded by Larry Vito. Motion carried. The meeting ended 7:41 pm.

NEXT MEETINGS; Open Meetings Law Committee meeting 12-15-22 @4pm.

Freedom of Information Law meeting on 12-22-22@1pm.

Public Relations/Education Group meeting on 1-5-23 @3pm.

Coalition Board meeting 1-12-23 @6:30pm.